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The Unitarian Christian

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GUEST EDITORIAL

It has been proposed to change the name of our fellowship and magazine from "Unitarian Christian" to "Liberal Christian." I think that this would be a grave mistake – for three chief reasons which I should like to suggest in order of ascending importance:

(1) "Liberal" is a sloppy word. It has a different meaning in every context in which it is used, and is consequently meaningless until given definition. There are already, it seems to me, enough sloppy epithets and slogans slung around in contemporary Unitarianism – e.g., the "free mind," "fellowship of seekers," "liberal religion," to mention but a few. It would be a pity if Unitarian Christians added another such phrase to this list – especially since they, among Unitarians as a whole, pride themselves on standing for something more clear and substantial than the mere freedom to believe what one wants.

(2) By dropping the name "Unitarian" from our fellowship and magazine we would weaken our connections with Unitarians in other parts of the world. The existence of Unitarian groups in other parts of the world, many with very ancient and distinguished traditions, seems all but unknown to most American Unitarians. This unfortunate situation ought not to be worsened but corrected. It is especially important to Unitarian Christians in America to strengthen this bond, as most of these foreign groups are clearly Unitarian *Christian* groups.

(3) The word "Unitarian" has, historically, stood for a theological position within Christianity as well as for a denominational body. By removing this name from our group we would cease to assert that it is possible and legitimate to be a Christian with a Unitarian theology – to be a Christian and still reject the fourth and fifth-century doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

The Orthodox Christians maintain, of course, that being a Christian *means* believing the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and that anyone who does not believe these doctrines is therefore not a Christian. This tactic is thus to define Unitarian or Anti-Trinitarian Christianity out of existence. The Unitarians *must* reply by continuing to define themselves back in. The mere fact that, since the fourth century, Anti-Trinitarian Christians have been in the minority is no reason why they should abandon their own definition of what it is to be a Christian. By Roman Catholic definition Episcopal orders are invalid, but the Episcopalians have not meekly surrendered their own definition of validity in this matter to Roman Catholic numerical superiority. Nor should Unitarian Christians surrender their own definition of Christianity to the more numerous Orthodox.

I contend that to abandon the term "Unitarian Christian" would be to hand over Christianity to the Orthodox on a silver platter. It will be remembered that they guffawed with glee when the word "Christian" was dropped from the name of the *Register* – saying that this showed conclusively that Unitarians weren't really Christians at all. The name "Unitarian Christian," maintained in our group and magazine, is now the only remaining assertion in America of the historic fact that Christianity and Christian Orthodoxy have not necessarily been considered the same thing. To abandon this name would be to give in to the Orthodox attempt to define us out of existence. It would go far towards making Unitarian Christianity what the Orthodox would like it to be – one more little Christian heresy which, for a while, marred the unity of the faith, but eventually withered and passed away.

The main point is that all Christians with a

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Training Men in The Christian Faith

The Inaugural Address at the Installation of the First President and the First Dean of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio

by Dr. Samuel H. Miller
Dean, Harvard Divinity School

Not long ago, an enterprising and not unphilosophical photographer published a book of fascinating candid camera shots of famous people caught in mid-air while they were jumping. The artist-photographer had a serious intention, not at all humorous, which he formulated in brief descriptions interpreting the mental attitudes of actors, bankers, theologians from Brigitte Bardot to Paul Tillich, using their peculiar expression in mid-air as evidence. The more I reflected on the phenomenon the less I thought of individuals and the more of the act itself. Indeed, in the current search for symbols, I felt I had found one. It looked to me as if the picture of a man caught in mid-air might well be a proper symbol for the contemporary minister. After all, he is up in the air, and no one knows quite where he is going to land, not even the minister himself. If any profession has grown confused about itself, its role in the world, it is the ministry. There was a time when the structures of confidence in our culture were religious, and the minister stood on solid ground. Today the structures of confidence are not religious but scientific or social or even commercial, and in this culture the minister has mighty little ground, if any, to stand on. He is caught in an agony of tense confusion, halfway between a world that has largely disappeared and a new world that has not yet found a place for him.

No more pressing task, therefore, confronts the Christian church of our day than to decide what it believes the minister ought to be and what he should do. It is not strange that the movies have caricatured him and made his image into a comical figure, but that the very Church itself should do so is tragic. Perhaps society can be forgiven for not knowing what it wants of the minister, but one finds it hard to justify the way in which the Church has betrayed the office by using the minister for a thousand purposes only remotely connected with the service of God. Certainly in such headlong confusion, the minister himself finds it well-nigh impossible to identify his own image with precision or to pursue his profession with discriminating courage and dignity.

If he clings tenaciously to the traditional image, he is likely to find himself literally outside the life of his people; if he identifies himself with the life of the time, he is likely to find himself outside the realm of anything substantially religious. Time and time again, at his best he seems to be selling an obsolete product, an ancient heirloom, something few people want to buy. In many instances he only becomes useful quite abruptly, without any real transition, at weddings, christenings, and funerals. Because there is so little transition, this sudden usefulness is a queer kind of thing, and usually induces the feeling of considerable uncomfortableness in all who are concerned.

To be sure, there is one way out of this embarrassment. The minister may drop his ministerial pretensions and set to work at developing his popularity. It will not be hard for him to be one of the crowd, to play the game at being a good fellow, telling the same jokes, head over heels in the same fads, acquainted with the passing phases of sports and superficial pleasures, climbing the same ladder of success, building up the image of success and prestige, promoting the frenetic frenzy of the Church. The job is easily and quickly done, but whether it rehabilitates the image of the minister or merely his ego is a question, and a serious one.

Confronted by such caricatures of the Christian ministry, it becomes essential both for the Church and the School to re-establish as precisely as they can the nature of the ministry. Certainly there is no other place where controls are as possible for this kind of basic work as in the School. A concentration of both historical and professional knowledge, the immediate necessity of shaping the character of the men entrusted to its training, and a perceptive and critical discrimination in the nature of the culture which the minister must serve, all imply that the School could well bend its efforts to this primary task.

A provocative sentence from Karl Marx may seem prosaic enough in itself, but it does have significance. The sentence is as follows: "The new forces of society need new men in order to

accomplish good work." If I may be pardoned for applying this plainly cogent remark to our present concern, I should simply say that a minister, if he is to serve the real needs and not the collectivized pressures, imaginary or illusory, of the men and women lost or malingering in this mad, muddled, and mighty age, cannot do it by imitating his nineteenth century predecessor or by conforming to the vanities of ecclesiastical prestige. If the minister has a specific contribution to make, it must be made in terms of the issues, dilemmas, and problems which actually torment the hearts and minds of the people who are trying against odds to make sense out of this particular age. He must be a new man for a new age.

The burden peculiar to this age may be represented by three major breakthroughs into new dimensions of consciousness, all of which are now confronting us with tremendous problems of conscience and inevitable decision. The first of these occurred about a century ago with the researches of Freud and Jung, when the subcellar of man's psyche was uncovered with all its embarrassment and devious mendacity. The second breakthrough occurred with the discovery of atomic energy, a new category of power unprecedented in history, with its frightening threat of human annihilation and the accompanying burden of dread and anxiety for the contemporary world. The third dimension of significance newly opened up is the achievement of a universal society including all nations and races of the world by the technological means of transportation and communication systems, making one world long before we had outgrown our racial and national prejudices. These are like new continents and they weigh on our consciousness as well as on our conscience. It is under such conditions we must practice the Christian faith.

The action of God within this earthly domain must be identified under the conditions *we* know; his worship must be celebrated in the face of *contemporary* doubt and distraction, his mercy must be felt in the midst of tight tensions and impossible pressures; his church must disclose certain realities within human reach and achieve a bond of human fellowship deep enough to sustain the meaning of true society in this broken world; his reality must not be a nostalgic remembrance but a vivid experience in which we are carried beyond our frustration and lay our hand at least momentarily on the Kingdom itself.

This means an increase of intellectual rigor in the training of the minister. The scope and diversity of skills demanded of the modern minister is tremendous and obviously impossible. But so it is with any contemporary profession. The breadth and depth of learning has increased beyond the hope of any man to span it, and the terrifying sophistications and vast tensions of the modern age in its burgeoning demands only add to the immeasurable burden. We are not equal to it — that is true; but we cannot avoid it — that is equally plain.

The intellectual demand on the minister is greater, by reason of the complexity of our culture and the unprecedented scope of our knowledge, than ever before in western history, yet we cannot turn our back on the disciplines of training by which we become competent in the field of Biblical criticism, or the exercise of historical method, or in the achievement of thelogical coherence and depth. These remain as basic to the minister as anatomy to a doctor or mathematics to an engineer. To subvert these in the interest of what has been deceptively called practical training is treason against religion. Yet it is precisely at this point that the intellectual problem of the ministry becomes serious. We cannot accept the dominance of the historical method, either in Biblical or historical studies, as final in the training of the minister, nor can we be satisfied with the usual escape into sheer pragmatism. The intellectual claim of the Christian faith is beyond both.

It is in a letter by Gustave Flaubert that our situation is rather accurately described:

"Beneath us the earth is trembling. Where can we place our fulcrum, even admitting that we possess the lever? The thing we all lack is not style, nor that dexterity of finger and box known as talent. We have a large orchestra, a rich palette, a variety of resources. We know many more tricks and dodges, probably, than were ever known before. No; what we lack is the intrinsic principle, the soul of the thing, the very idea of the subject. We take notes, we make journeys: emptiness! Emptiness! We become scholars, archaeologists, historians, doctors, cobblers, connoisseurs. What good is all that? Where is the heart, the verve, the sap? Where to start out from? Where to go to?" [1]

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[1]Introduction to *The Hinge of History,* by Carl Michalson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959.

The basic task of the minister today in the face of a threatened society is nothing less than furnishing the people with a vision of reality in which their experience becomes meaningful and their lives significant. In many periods of history this has been a rather simple task, inasmuch as the minister found such a vision already established in a generally accepted tradition, celebrated in communal rites and supporting a social unity of meaning and value. For Dante, Aquinas, and the builders of cathedrals, the vision of reality was a dynamic coalescence of Aristotelian structures and Christian traditions. But for us, the unity has been lost in the burgeoning powers and autonomous forces of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Industrial Revolution. Nothing characterizes our life so much as its fragmentation. The pieces of science, art, reason, faith, industry, state, individualism, society each seem good in themselves, but they simply do not fit together. In truth we have inherited so many traditions, each with its own system of values and its own direction, that our moral sense is tormented and distracted by inevitable and ubiquitous contradictions. The chaos of our world which we deplore so generally or defend as pluralism theoretically is a mild reflection of the inner state of confusion, where we seek some kind of integrity by reducing our experience to a single field of fanatical and somewhat neurotic loyalty.

One thing is certain: Without a vision of reality there is no unity, no integrity, no center to life, no direction to work or history, no communication for community, no meaning for human peace or joy. In the ancient sense and with modern point, without a vision of reality the people cease to be a people; they fall apart inwardly and outwardly and their end is to perish.

The essential burden of the minister is to accept this uncomfortable position. His agony is to stand at the frontier where one must wait on the Lord, wait intensely, actively, forever seeking the Word that will make sense out of life, and let the glory of it shine like shook foil. To stand in the darkness, to tear it apart with one's own hands and heart, to invade these new territories and to let the gospel illumine their meaning.

Indeed, I know of nothing which characterizes the minister so much as a steward of such mysteries of revelations. It is given to men from time to time to cross the threshold from the "ordinary trance of life" into the fullness of reality. The trouble is, these breakthroughs often occur without ever being identified. Men simply do not know they have been visited by God. They have eyes but do not see, and hearts but do not perceive. What happens to them, happens; and nothing more. It is never unfolded, never nurtured by insight and reflection, never brought to fullness by patient attention, never fulfilled at last by the imagination in a bold act of recognition as divinely given.

This in truth is the act of redemption, the only business of the minister. By such action of insight, affirmation, and celebration he does the will of God and follows Christ in the saving work of grace. This work never begins big, but always small; always with a grain of mustard seed, a child, a man lost and without self-importance, an event seemingly insignificant. It begins its work anywhere, under the most inauspicious conditions, with the most unfavorable circumstances. It begins as a poem begins, anywhere in this old world, and it ends with new beauty; it begins, where any artist begins, with what everybody sees and it ends with a vision none of them suspected. Reality is simply the willingness to start where it seems God is absent, but with the assurance and hope that He must be there if one stays long enough and loves deep enough. If it is finally brought to pass, then revelation illumines a whole life through this tiny chink in the dark wall of mortal circumstance; a miracle has happened, the bush has burned in the wilderness, a soul has found itself in God's hands. And this is inimitable; it does not lend itself to any statistics, or to the power of the Church, or to the popularity of the preacher. It is essentially incommunicable, unusable for publicity purposes.

The minister, in the poet Holderlin's words, is the "shepherd of being." *The shepherd of being* — not of appearance, not of prestige, not of respectability or of reputation, certainly not of success or of pretention. He is concerned with the richness of "being," the plain glory, the sublime simplicity, the inexhaustible possibility of *being*. He is to probe the vain wrappings, the loose dry husks, the flamboyant gestures, the proud false postures, to find honest being — blessed are the poor, they who cannot masquerade or hide their humanity; blessed are the meek, self-disciplined by the knowledge of human limitations; blessed are they that mourn, who sorrow in life for death works in us all! If the minister could shepherd *being*, care for it, love it, celebrate it, value it,

and refuse to compromise as far as he is able with all unreality!

Were this criterion to be taken seriously, a great deal of all the elaborate activity so pretentiously erected in and about the modern church would collapse. The minister's business is ascetic, that is to say, he is to cut away whatever is superficial, extraneous, dubious. He is to strip off the vain, the ecclesiastical fat, the vulgar pretense, the vacuuous publicity. He is to find the substance of life, the real center, the core of its essential agony and dignity — and then to confirm it and celebrate it in faith and with rejoicing.

If he is to be trained as a shepherd of being, there is no place where he may find such disclosures as in that strange elusive reality we call the Gospel. Most of our contemporary existence lacks substance; it is two-dimensioned. In the Gospel, there is a whole level of life waiting for men to inhabit, a fullness and richness of content and meaning forever open, forever free, but forever demanding the transformation of the self over which the minister, so to speak, presides. Or to put the matter negatively, there is a level of life, as high above happiness as happiness is above damnation, from which we have withdrawn in our foolish search for wordly substitutes and Utopian illusions.

This level of life is not a chapter in a book simply to be read. It can only be authentically known by lending one's own life to it. The instrument of recognition is bifocal, synoptic. It rests both in that ancient Gospel in the pages of history and in the imperfect, inchoate, unidentified, still waiting to be fulfilled, realities of one's own existence. Until these two things are put together and put together well, so that each illumines the other, there is no saving grace in the New Testament itself, and there is no salvation in one's life. These two brought together, enact the recognition, the reconciliation, the redemption.

In the second place, nowhere in the Christian church of our time is there greater need for training than precisely at the point where the minister articulates those experiences in the life of his people in such a way as to make worship possible. Certainly, in the Church today there is nothing more primary, more basic, more radically significant than its worship of God. If it could clarify this, it would become a significant institution, redeeming society and bearing good news to the world. As it is, under its present form of worship, worship itself has dwindled to something which no longer excites or threatens the world with its powers or its joy. Not until worship has been revolutionarily reformed and we have discovered some image or symbol capable of making sense out of such a confused and contradictory world as ours will the Church be able to speak with relevance and force to our time or to motivate the dying will of men already overwhelmed and exhausted by their restlessness and attempt to escape the dilemma they cannot solve.

In back of this necessity of training men to articulate the experience of men and women in such a way that worship becomes possible, there lies a third task, a difficult ordeal of developing a more profound sensibility among our people for those skills and arts which comprise worship and out of which an authentic church may be incorporated. It will not be easy to turn our dervish-mad people, restless and exhausted, caught in the mad rush, the squirrel cage, the rat race, to some degree of contemplative ability. Yet, if they are unable to hold within their souls the vision of a good and merciful God, how shall they pray? If they cannot find the quiet by which they can pull together the distraught and distracted elements of their own experience out of the rubbish of overcrowdedness and hectic pursuit, how shall they really worship?

If they do not know how to turn from this whirling wheel of the world to that inner silence and the mysteries of the soul to hold in their quiet hands the mystery of their living and dying, their rising and falling, their sin and goodness, if they cannot do this, how shall they pray or confess or glorify God? One marvels that worship still retains even the semblance of Christian dimensions of repentance and hope, of aspiration and the desire for forgiveness, under circumstances which in our time have almost entirely inebriated the service to become a madhouse of frantic manipulation, seeking only to cover up the wounds rather than to cauterize them, to bandage the sores rather than to cure them, to hide the cancerous difficulties rather than to bring them into the open, to make everything seem respectable when, under God's judgement, we know that none of us stands before him except as a sinner. The development of such sensibilities for worship and authentic fellowship, such as contemplation and true inwardness might achieve, will be undertaken only at considerable cost of popularity, prestige, and

statistical success. These are preparations for worship which cannot be carried on en masse nor can they be inculcated in a Dale Carnegie course.

The minister stands today in a most precarious position—not always knowing what his position is, not always sure what the world expects of him, and not always encouraged to do the will of God even by the Church. He stands in a world from which sanity has fled, in a Church heavily corrupted by passions derived from the Industrial Revolution, and with training which often has little or no relevance for the agony of the spirit he must endure if he attempts to be a man of God among a people more concerned with peace of mind or the approbation of false respectability than the coming of the Kingdom. Indeed, the likeliest image I know of a man seriously concerned with being a minister in our kind of world and in our kind of churches is his primary willingness to be a failure in the sight of both. This could well be the first vow, a sort of Hippocratic oath, to be taken in preparation for the mysteries of Christian experience articulated in the Beatitudes—those mysteries of the Christian faith whose existential meaning we have lost in the welter of getting ahead in the world.

What I have been trying to say is that a minister in this day must recover his place in life, not only socially, but literally in the sense of sharing the doubts, the shame, the hidden wounds and secret torment of our age. He must articulate the human question, both to be honest about himself and to help others who have forgotten how to be honest about themselves. He must get rid of the silly masks and the pretentious poses especially of church members who think they are Christian when they are only respectable. He must make plain how easy it is to lose one's soul in church, to be lost in success, to be smothered in wealth, confused by knowledge or betrayed by power.

He must be forever in search of the God who hides so humbly in life, the deus absconditus, who delights in making the Word flesh, and turning the shame of the cross into the hope of the world. Learn where to put your finger down in common everyday mortal experience, in the troubles and ecstacies, in dreams and in tragedies; find God in Tom, Dick, and Harry, in devils and in deacons, in sophisticates and in simples. Dwell close by the mystery of God; be on the alert for his unpredictable mercy, the gay tricks of His holy spirit.

Gentlemen, let us make ourselves an image. We have ample history to draw on—patriarch and prophet, disciple and saint, preachers and reformers—Abraham and Augustine, Jeremiah and Luther, the magnitude of greatness belongs to our calling. We need not conform to the world's image; to be what the world wants may only corroborate its false respectability and empty success. Let us recover the joy of St. Francis, the passion of Luther, the vigor of Wesley, the unpretentious power of Jesus himself.

The world does not need bigger churches, or wealthier ones. It does not need more propaganda, or more sermons, or vaster campaigns, or larger congregations. It needs a new kind of man, living in a new way. It needs only one, or perhaps a few to show there is a better way, a way in which he comes to himself and is at peace with God—a man transfigured with the plain glory of compassion, living in open fellowship with all men and bringing all life into the Kingdom of God. A new kind of man for a new age—more skeptical of this world's illusions, more critical of pretentious piety and vain respectability, more perceptive of God's motions in the human heart, more imaginative in recognizing the signs of divinity in the least expected places, more courageous in being honest than in being popular, more willing to grapple with the dimensions of the new world than to live comfortably on the heritage of the past; in short, a new kind of saint. Nothing less is demanded of the man of God called to minister at such a time as this.

GUEST EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 2)

Unitarian *theology* want to continue to consider themselves, and to be considered, *as* Christians. For this reason Unitarian Christianity as a theology must continue to be affirmed. This consideration applies to Christians in Universalist churches as well as in Unitarian ones, for the Universalist Christians cherish their Unitarian *theology* just as much as Christians in Unitarian churches do. It therefore seems to me to the advantage of both groups, now in closer union, *not* to alter the name "Unitarian Christian."

Peter Tapke
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia

Contemporary Problems in Religious Education

by Rev. Lawrence Marvin Jaffa
First Parish in Groton, Massachusetts

An extension of the address delivered to the Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship on April 10, 1961.

In her provocative article, "Let your children know what you believe in . . . so they can learn to make good decisions on their own," Genevieve H. Millet writes for *Parents' Magazine* of March 1961, "In our eagerness to be fair we abdicated our responsibility to make value judgments not only in conversation but in real life, in our most important and 'valuable' job, bringing up our children . . ." This comment from a popular, non-sectarian magazine seems very similar to an anecdote quoted by Mrs. Rose S. Ashbrook, Director of Religious Education for the West Shore Unitarian Church, Rocky River, Ohio. Mrs. Ashbrook tells us, "Once a little child said to her teaching mother, 'I have a good idea for a worship service. You could just talk about things I'd like to know more about. Who is God? How did he get his name? Why do people worship him? Why is he so great? Why do people think he formed the earth?' And her mother said, 'These are things we talk about often at home.' 'Yes,' she answered, 'but maybe they know more about them at church. I'm tired of those people at church always asking me what I think. I think I know what I think. I want to know what they think about this.'"

Perhaps, this is a modern proof of the old text, "a little child shall lead them!" Our children want to know what *we* think. Liberal Christians have an obligation to answer these children. One of the first things we must do is disabuse our minds of the shibboleth, "It doesn't matter what we think; we don't have to emphasize content; we have our method." On the contrary, content is more important than method. There is a positive content to Liberal Christianity which can be taught by varying methods depending upon the physical structure of the Church School, the size and composition of classes, and the skill and special aptitudes of the teacher. This content can be summarized in James Freeman Clarke's statement of Our Faith. More elaborately our content might be spelled out in terms of the Goodness of a God of Love and Justice, the Goodness of Men who have the capacity to help each other grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and Men; the Goodness of the Order and dependability of the Universe and our ability to relate to it in Freedom for our own self-realization, and the Goodness of a world in which we learn ever better ways to cooperate with and strengthen each other.

Educational Psychology affirms that learning is facilitated when abstract concepts are anchored directly to concrete experience. Meanings may outdistance concrete experience by a very slight margin and still be learned or understood. In order to stay within these safe limits I have approached this topic as my experience has advanced my conviction of the possibility of arranging the educational experience of the child to recapitulate the cultural experience of the race.

This hypothesis has been commended to me after my seven years' experience in public school teaching. In an academic context the permissive method, the child-centered program, very often leads to a clique-dominated class room. Children psychologically seem to value and need leadership at the sixth grade level. They responded well to a citizenship project based upon the concepts of chivalry, heraldry, and ranks of the peerage.

For twenty-five years I have been concerned with the Boy Scouts of America. One year I was simultaneously a leader in Scouting and in the Gra Y of the Y.M.C.A. The Scout program with some indications of paternalism seemed to succeed much better with the same age boy than the "group work" approach of the Y.M.C.A.

These incidents have been recorded in some detail because I was impressed by the simularity discovered in three types of educational experience: religious, public school, and voluntary organization. In all three there was evidence that children of the eleven to thirteen age group are "in" (i.e. need to recapitulate) the cultural epoch of status "authority" society exemplified by the medieval synthesis. This led to the thought that children of other age levels might

be "in" (psychologically) other cultural stages, and that a sound religious educational program might be developed on the theory that just as the human embryo recapitulates the physiological experience of the race so might the human child need to recapitulate the previous psychological stages of development in order to be prepared for enlightened, emancipated, citizenship in the 20th Century. In short, that democratic idealism in order to be appreciated had, in each individual's experience, to be built upon the successive climates of opinion of primitive, authoritarian, or scientific Man. Or, as Henry Drummond has beautifully expressed it:

> "It has often been noticed that there is a certain analogy between the life of the individual and that of the race, and even that the life of the individual is a sort of epitome of the history of humanity. But, as Plato already discovered, it is by reading the large letters that we learn to interpret the small. . ."

Is there any way to support this thesis? What is the evidence? I shall trace here, briefly, the line my investigation has followed for education in general and then make a few suggestions for a religious education curriculum based upon this theory.

Several hours with the *Educational Index* and *Psychological Abstracts* yielded so little that one was reminded of the Grand Lama's comment in *Lost Horizon* that anything worthy eventually was included in a book so his library did not subscribe to periodicals!

One article, however in *School and Society* for June, 1930, made the search worthwhile. Dr. Edwin G. Conklin, then Professor of Biology at Princeton, delivered an address before the American Educational Research Association in which he pointed out the simularity between developmental process of body and mind. He affirmed:

> "Man is not born a speaking animal, but only capable of learning to speak and the language learned depends on education. The same is true of countless intellectual and social customs that are at least as old as civilization; they are not inherited thru the germ plasm but are learned anew in each generation."

This learning process is of the utmost concern. The whole long debate among Evolutionists tics is relevant for if the learning of one generation could be transmitted intact our hypothesis while perhaps not untrue would be unnecessary. C. Lloyd Morgan, writing on the mental factors in evolution, quotes Sir E. Roy Lankester:

> "Educability can be transmitted, it is a congenital character. But the *results* of education can *not* be transmitted. In each generation they have to be acquired afresh."

So far we have established by Dr. Conklin that there is a "simularity" of developmental about the inheritance of acquired characteris- process of mind and body. We have accepted the evidence that education has to be a fresh experience for each generation. Now let us examine both physical and mental development more closely. Martin and Stendler, authorities on child development, state categorically:

> "There is a special time in the prenatal timetable for the development of each organ. If an organ does not develop at the proper time it will never be able to realize itself fully since the moment for the development of some other part will have arrived."

In considering prenatal life we are led to wonder and admire, as did Drummond, that we observe a "spectacle which for strangeness and majesty stands alone in the field of biological research . . . in the successive transformation of the human embryo there is reproduced before our eyes a visible, actual, physical representation of the life history of the world."

Here the emphasis is to be placed upon the importance of *timing* and *sequence*. These concepts continue to be important to the individual equally after birth. Education is to follow a sequence of development and Friedrich Froebel in his *Education of Man* underscores and repeats this theme:

> "The rigorous and complete development and cultivation of each successive stage depends on the vigorous, complete and characteristic development of each and all preceding stages of life. . ."

My contention, at this point, is that there is a plane in liberal religious education for learning by rote as well as an ever-increasing number of places for developing reasoning.

Citing these incidents establishes the importance of sequence and timing in mental devel-

opment. Now the theory into which these data are integrated must be considered. Historically this theory has had two names. When the socio-economic phases of civilization have had major emphasis and the individual has been presumed to repeat them it is known as the "Culture Epoch" theory. When the physiological stages of human life have been viewed as primary it has been called the "Recapitulation" theory.

Jean Jacques Rousseau in his *Emile* gave perhaps the first formulation when he reversed the traditional view that society goes through the ages of individual life and instead postulated man goes through the history of the race. Man develops from the animal to the savage, to the solitary (Robinson Crusoe), thence the rational, and ultimately the social being. Probably because of his own experience Rousseau believed these changes were crises fraught with emotional disturbance. Froebel who advanced the culture recapitulation theory differed from Rousseau at this point, as he believed the process through the stages was one of gradual unfolding from infancy to childhood, to boyhood, youth and maturity successively.

Johann Friedrich Herbart was the other principle follower of Rousseau in this theory. In his writings and in those of his follower Tuiskon Ziller, the theory is expounded that the stages of development of the embryo and of the young of a species recapitulate animal evolution. Curtis and Boulwood say of Ziller that he won "fame, not free from criticism for interpreting Herbart's ideas somewhat freely."

Herbart, however, followed one very sound developmental principle in that he believed learning should be grouped around central ideas. In this educational plan he followed physiological development in which progress is from center to periphery (Can we infer support here for a content centered religious education experience?)

In the United States G. Stanley Hall is the best known and most often cited exponent of the recapitulation theory. He believed the recapitulation included the instincts and mental processes of past ages. Thus a child passes through a hunting period, a cave period, a building period among others. Projects in Church School will be more certain of success when they are oriented to these periods.

Before proceeding to the critics of the theory let us summarize the evidence gleaned so far. There is an essential sequence to embryonic development. There is an essential sequence to motor skills. There is postulated a correlative sequence of mental processes. These may be combined in the theory that education should recapitulate the experience of the race also and some evidence is adduced for this from the differentiated function of man's retrospection and language. This is the writer's thesis.

The antithesis may be more concisely restated. The refutations are on three levels and are given by John Dewey in *Democracy and Education*, page 85, as follows:

> 1. ". . . The idea which underlies it (recapitulation theory) is that education is essentially retrospective and that it looks primarily to the past, and especially to the literary products of the past and that mind is adequately patterned upon the spiritual heritage of the past. . .
> 2. Development, in short, has taken place by the entrance of short cuts and alterations in the prior scheme of growth.
> 3. The business of education is rather to liberate the young from reviving and retraversing the past than to lead them to a recapitulation of it."

Dewey's first and third criticisms are more subjective than his second which is reinforced by Brubacker who says the theory "was discarded in the light of more accurate scientific evidence."

On Dewey's first point there is more room for rebuttal. Dewey seems overconcerned with the literary component of the recapitulation theory. True, Colonel Parker did take over the idea of teaching the history and morality of the past but insisted on adding science also. But let Froebel speak of his method as he envisioned it, the recapitulation, "should not be done in a way of dead imitation, mere copying, but in the way of living spontaneous activity."

As to the third point of the validity of education leading children to recapitulate rather than liberate them from the past there are certain areas in which the past is a profitable mentor. Stephens in discussing the supposed inability to practice the skill of prose composition because the pupil either repeats his own childish ideas or copies the suggested ideas an adult offers finds a solution from the classicist's point of view in the study of Latin.

> "By means such as these, the students should get practice in rendering complicated,

subtle, and important ideas into acceptable English. By the time he is old enough to have any very elaborate ideas of his own, he has already received a great deal of experience in putting into English some of the most important ideas that have come down from the ages."

Curtis and Boultwood add: "No longer is it enough for the human body-mind to be merely a vehicle for the conveyance of past ideas" but they feel A. N. Whitehead is nearer the truth in his rhythm theory of education and they quote his ideas of "the conveyance of difference within a framework of competition."

In view of the potential power of the second criticism of changed scientific data to negate the whole thesis it may not be too unfair to leave the statement of antithesis at this point and proceed to the synthesis.

The recapitulation theory has posited an identity between physiological and psychological evolution. Critics of this theory point out that by observing *nature* in fact taking short cuts there is no basis for *social* recapitulation. Further they question the efficacy of a retrospective orientation for education. In what direction then may we look for a synthesis?

We started with the premise that if the physiological development was a recapitulation why was it not possible for the mental development to be also. We find our thought blocked by the fact that nature takes short cuts. A new perspective is indicated and it is to be found in three facts.

There is some evidence that placing primary emphasis on physical evolution is the error, not that the analogy is incorrect. H. Hoffding, under the heading of "The Influence of Evolution on Modern Philosophy" writes:

> "While the starting point of Spencer was biological or cosmological, psychical evolution being conceived as an analogy with physical, a group of eminent thinkers, in Germany Wundt, in France Fouille, in Italy Ardigo — took, each in his own manner their starting point in psychical evolution as an original fact and as a type of all evolution."

Charles J. Whitby offers another change of perspective which bears consideration: "The individual is perhaps not the creature of evolution, but evolution the self-display of the individual."

Thirdly and more satisfying to me is the suggestion by Henry Drummond that there is a third factor not yet appreciated. We have been arguing whether mental development parallels physical or whether physical development derives from psychical and if a short cut in the evolutionary process of one invalidates the need for recapitulation of the other or negates the whole concept of analogy or whether both are denied. We have overlooked the truth that "Man's true life is neither lived in the material tracts of the body, nor in the higher attitudes of the intellect, but in the warm world of the affections."

Here is a tentative schedule for a religious education program based upon the recapitulation theory. The divisions, it must be repeated, are tentative, both as to grouping and material. This "table" is offered to suggest further study.

RELIGIOUS STAGES OF MANKIND	CHURCH SCHOOL AGE GROUP	POSSIBLE MATERIAL
Animism — Fetishism	Nursery and pre-school	Psalms, "How Miracles Abound," "Little Golden Book of Hymns," "Little Island"
Polytheism	Kindergarten	"Beginnings," "Gift of Life," "Little White Church"
Henotheism, Age of "Heroes"	First Grade	"From Long Ago and Many Lands," Egermeir's "Bible ABC Picture Book"
Monotheism (General or basic)	Second Grade	Golden Bible, "Abraham" "Joseph and His Brothers"
Monotheism (Tribal)	Third Grade	"Child of the Sun," "Moses,"

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RELIGIOUS STAGES OF MANKIND	CHURCH SCHOOL AGE GROUP	POSSIBLE MATERIAL
Monotheism (Ritualistic)	Fourth & Fifth Grades	"Soul of the Bible," "Drama of Ancient Israel," "Men of Prophetic Fire,"
Monotheism (Universal)	Sixth Grade	"Jesus," Jefferson Bible, Dickens "Life of Our Lord"
Medieval Synthesis (Age of Faith)	Seventh & Eighth Grades	"Church Across the Street," "One God and the Ways We Worship Him," "Noble Lives and Noble Deeds"
Renaissance	Ninth & Tenth Grades	Vail's "Heroic Lives," "Socrates," Fitch's "Allah, God of Islam," and "Their Search for God," "Bible of the World"
Reformation	Eleventh & Twelfth Grades	"Great Companions" "Path-breakers," "Servetus," James Freeman Clarke's "Unitarian Faith," William Lawrance's "Manual for a Confirmation Class"
Scientific Enlightenment	College & Young Adults	Wilbur's "Unitarianism"
Maturing Faith of the Future	Adult Education	"Tertium Organum" by Ouspensky "Studies in Altruism" by Sorokin

These suggestions are based upon chronology of concept. Individual books may be substituted to present the concept at the appropriate level for the age. For each class an effort has been made to utilize both Beacon Press materials and other worthy publications.

Church School experience at every level should aim to support and cultivate a positive, liberal Christian faith so our children may know what we think and believe, and may be led to guide their lives and actions in consonance with this faith to the end that each of us may, as Emerson enjoined, "acquaint men first hand with Deity." Viewed from this perspective Religious Education could have a vital impact upon all education. Through this experience we could come to understand as Froebel understood:

> "Education consists in leading man, as a thinking, intelligent being, growing into self-consciousness, to pure and unsullied, conscious and free representation of the inner law of Divine Unity and in teaching him ways and means thereto."